

**PERUSAL SCRIPT**

# **Sleepy Hollow**

by  
**Matthew Ivan Bennett**

adapted from Washington Irving's short story "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow"

**Episode 13 of the Radio Hour SERIES**



Newport, Maine

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## **SLEEPY HOLLOW**

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## CAST OF CHARACTERS —(3–7 actors)\*

The Chronicler  
Ichabod  
Brom  
Old Peg  
Maggie  
Kat  
Hans  
Voice in the Night

### *\*Doubling:*

The Chronicler/Voice In The Night  
Old Peg/Maggie/Kat/Voice In The Night  
Ichabod/Hans/Brom/Voice in the Night

The play can be done solely as a radio broadcast, or it can be done LIVE onstage with a radio show set up with actors on mics and SFX and MUSIC provided live, or both.

**SLEEPY HOLLOW:** RADIO HOUR Episode 13 by Matthew Ivan Bennett. 4m 3f +1 either, can be doubled to 2m 1f, 48 minutes. **Lose your heads with us.** A fraidy-cat schoolmaster tries to court the most eligible bachelorette in Sleepy Hollow and finds himself at odds with the Headless Horseman. Recognized as the first truly American ghost story, this fascinating quasi-supernatural tale on thwarted love and jealousy has its horror embodied in jealousy and toxic masculinity **ORDER # 3034**

**MATTHEW IVAN BENNETT** is a resident of Plan-B Theatre, listed by American Theater magazine as one of 14 companies nationwide exemplifying social action and civic engagement. At Plan-B, he's premiered several stage and radio plays, including an adaptation of "*Frankenstein*" that won a Utah Broadcasters Association award and "*Eric(a)*"—which won Best Drama at the United Solo festival in New York. He received the Holland New Voices award from the Great Plains Theatre Commons, has twice been a finalist in screenwriting at Austin Film Festival, and in 2016 was an O'Neill finalist. His short plays have appeared at Chicago's Circle Theatre, Rising Sun in New York, Monkeyman in Toronto, and the Source Festival in DC. Matt is a member of the Dramatists' Guild.

**PART 1**

**MUSIC**

*(ICHABOD humming)*

**F/X:** *Woods;*

*Rustling in a thicket.*

*(ICHABOD inhales sharply)*

**THE CHRONICLER:** *(to the audience)* For a learned man, Ichabod Crane startled easily. He startled at the moan of whippoorwills...

**F/X:** *Whip-poor-will.*

*(ICHABOD spooks)*

**THE CHRONICLER:** At the boding of tree frogs...

**F/X:** *Croak.*

*(ICHABOD spooking more)*

**THE CHRONICLER:** And if, by some chance, the night flung a beetle against his face, well...

**F/X:** *Insect.*

*(ICHABOD screams/slaps at himself)*

**THE CHRONICLER:** The schoolmaster, however, could be forgiven his faint heart, as the road that he walked home ran very near a glen by the name of Sleepy Hollow.

**F/X:** *Horse cry.*

**ICHABOD:** Hello?

**THE CHRONICLER:** Some say the place was fouled by a German magus. Some that it was cursed by Indigenous elders.

**ICHABOD:** Hello...?

**THE CHRONICLER:** The children had too many nightmares. The farmers heard chanting at the forest's edge. Ichabod was not the only one to see bad luck in a beetle. He was not the only one to meet ghosts on the road.

*(ICHABOD runs)*

**## SCENE BREAK ##**

**F/X:** *Crowd.*

**BROM:** I'm telling you, you old fogey: on the road to Tarry I raced the Headless Horseman for a bowl of punch.

**OLD PEG:** Oh pig spit!

**BROM:** On my honor, Peg.

**OLD PEG:** What's the goin' rate for that?

**ICHABOD:** Dear neighbors, do not bicker.

**BROM:** I'm not bickering, Crane, she is, she's accusing me of spinning yarns. Would I spin yarns about ghosts on the road for our new schoolmaster?

**OLD PEG:** You open your mouth, it's a yarn.

**BROM:** The Horseman and me and my steed rushed along every bend.

*(sips beer)*

**OLD PEG:** That thing outside is no “steed.”

**BROM:** I will call him what he is, Peg: he's proper steed for a proper man.

*(sips beer)*

**OLD PEG:** That horse's nothin' but vinegar. Now stop drinkin' Mr. Crane's beer.

**BROM:** This beer?

**ICHABOD:** I let him.

**BROM:** The beer he left sitting?

**OLD PEG:** The beer he paid for.

**ICHABOD:** I did pay, but he can have it. I filled my canteen from a knothole earlier today. I'm well watered.

**OLD PEG:** He's drinking out of trees, man, give him back his pint.

**BROM:** Take back your vilification of Daredevil and I will.

*(long sip)*

**ICHABOD:** Who's Daredevil?

**OLD PEG:** His so-called horse — which ain't daring at all, though we agree on devil.

**BROM:** That gelding *you* ride looks like a chunk of old milk. You could be twins.

**OLD PEG:** Bah! Don't bother with this one, Mr. Crane. He seems affable, but he ain't.

**ICHABOD:** Worry not, Missus—

**OLD PEG:** I ain't no missus.

**ICHABOD:** Miss.

**OLD PEG:** No miss either, never married. I'm Peg. Or Old Peg. No titles.

**ICHABOD:** Forgive me, Old Peg, but you need not worry for my perspicaciousness.

**OLD PEG:** Your what?

**ICHABOD:** My powers of judgment in friend or information. I can winnow the wheat.

**BROM:** Ha! You see? Mr. Crook Nose here has read a dozen books, I bet.

**ICHABOD:** More than that.

**BROM:** More?! How many?!

**ICHABOD:** I lost count.

**BROM:** God's wounds, did you hear that, woman?

**OLD PEG:** I heard, boy.

**BROM:** Did you hear that through the gobs of wax in your ears? He's lost count.

**ICHABOD:** It's a finite number.

**BROM:** Would you say fifty?

**ICHABOD:** I don't like to crow.

**BROM:** You should.

**ICHABOD:** I shan't.

**BROM:** Have a bit of pride.

**ICHABOD:** My mother urges humility.

**BROM:** Is your family full of geniuses? I bet it is. I'm going to look them up. Is she a genius?

**ICHABOD:** No — well, yes, she's gifted in a way, Mr. Bones.

**OLD PEG:** Don't call him Bones; he's a Van Brunt, tail to snout.

**ICHABOD:** Oh, I thought you said your surname was “Bones.”

**BROM:** It's my chosen name. It's what friends call me.

**OLD PEG:** Bah.

**BROM:** Bah yourself, you dumpy old heathen.

*(to Ichabod)*

You were saying.

**ICHABOD:** Ah, yes, my mother: she's very sensitive to spirits — moreso than I.

**BROM:** My family is sensitive to spirits.

**OLD PEG:** The kind you find in a bottle.

**F/X:** *Glass shatters;*

*The crowd hushes.*

**BROM:** You go too far, Peg! You cannot slander my family in front of half the town.

**OLD PEG:** I'm not slanderin' anyone. But I won't have you fillin' his head with hooey.

**BROM:** Are you saying there's no Headless Horseman? No Devil? No witches?

**OLD PEG:** I'm not sayin' there's no Horseman, you pretty-boy swaggerer.

**BROM:** If you're saying “No Horseman,” you slander everyone in five miles.

**ICHABOD:** The reports of the specter are widespread and there was a witch last month.

**OLD PEG:** I'm not denyin' what people say. Or that I sometimes feel a draught when I pass the churchyard.

**BROM:** When have you gone near a church?

**OLD PEG:** I go by it and it's still a free country.

**BROM:** “Free.” What's that mean, Mr. Crane?

**OLD PEG:** What's it mean for a dead man with no head to wager you a bowl of punch? Sweep up the glass and tell me that.

**BROM:** I never said the Headless Horseman wagered me a bowl of punch!

**OLD PEG:** You did so!

**ICHABOD:** You did, sir.

**BROM:** *I* wagered *him* the punch!

**MUSICAL STING**

**## SCENE BREAK ##**

**F/X:** *Woods (muted)*

*(ICHABOD panting)*

**THE CHRONICLER:** And so with barley on his breath, Ichabod hurried down the road — past the whippoorwills and frogs and beetles — and came to the haven of his little iron stove.

*(ICHABOD blows on coals)*

**F/X:** *Flames.*

He settled on a pile of straw and warmed his fingers. The story of Brom Bones flickered in his head. What would he do, if he met the specter with no head?

*(a long sigh from Ichabod)*

He chided himself.

**ICHABOD:** Running from a whinny.

**THE CHRONICLER:** It had probably been an ordinary horse and not an evil spirit. Probably.

**F/X:** *Pages.*

He found his page in Cotton Mather's *History of New England Witchcraft*.

**ICHABOD:** The only antidote for fear, my son, is knowledge.

*(yawns)*

**THE CHRONICLER:** Alas his scholarship cured him of nothing before the moon rose. The half-drunk beer from Old Peg's drew him deeper into the straw, and from there into dreams.

**F/X:** *Horse cry into...*

**## SCENE BREAK ##**

**F/X:** *Chalk squeaking.*

**THE CHRONICLER:** The next morning his pupils gaped in silence at the horror on the blackboard.

**ICHABOD:** Now, which of you can untangle this numerary knot?

*(blowing away dust)*

Hmm? Anyone? ... Did the old teacher do no arithmetic with you?

**F/X:** *Lots of chalk.*

**THE CHRONICLER:** By noon, Ichabod was supervising the class in drawing. He would have to go easy on this town, he thought — even if he felt uneasy being in it.

**ICHABOD:** Oh my, Marjorie.

**MAGGIE:** It's Maggie.

**ICHABOD:** Right. Maggie. What a ghastly physique you've drawn. Who is your subject? Don't tell me, let me guess. Is that the scarecrow by the mayor's house?

**MAGGIE:** Nnn, no.

**ICHABOD:** Is it Job from the Bible, half-starved and tearing his robe in grief?

**MAGGIE:** Nnn...



**ICHABOD:** Living or dead?

**MAGGIE:** Living, but not very well.

**F/X:** *Tittering.*

**ICHABOD:** Ah. Is it someone you know?

**MAGGIE:** Yes, sir.

**F/X:** *More tittering.*

**ICHABOD:** *(to the others)* What are you snickering at? Back to work with you.

*(to Maggie)*

So it's a living person, someone you know...

**THE CHRONICLER:** And then he saw it: the likeness.

**ICHABOD:** Well.

*(sniffing)*

Well.

**F/X:** *Tittering all around.*

**ICHABOD:** Give me your slate, Marjorie.

**MAGGIE:** Who?

**ICHABOD:** Maggie. Give it here.

*(to the titterers)*

And you hush. I said hush! Stop your tittering or I shall provoke its opposite!

*(claps hard at them)*

**MUSICAL STING**

**## SCENE BREAK ##**

**F/X:** *Cows moo.*

**THE CHRONICLER:** As the day wasted, Ichabod obsessed over the drawing as he trudged along. The girl had made him lank, with feet like shovels, a nose like a weather-cock.

**ICHABOD:** You're hideous. You're a hideous man. Even the children think it.

**THE CHRONICLER:** He'd always been tender about his looks and his mother had not helped. She'd often said about his father:

*(with Ichabod)*

“The man was uglier than Caliban.” He knew but two things about his father: he was ugly and was stabbed eleven times. The second fact he'd acquired not from his mother, but the asylum she died in. Until the last rattle of Mary Gibson Crane, she'd insisted the Devil was everywhere and had possessed his father.

**F/X:** *Ducks startling into flight.*

Yet now was not the time for self-absorption: he had a new pupil today.

**MUSIC (CLASSICAL PIANO)**

A piano tinkled from the Van Tassel's mansion. Squadrons of geese rode in the pond; regiments of turkeys gobbled in the yard. As Ichabod strode near, he pictured them roasting in apple juice. The schoolmaster had been living on hard bread and so he planned to accord himself well with the Van Tassel child.

**F/X:** *Door knocker.*

A butler led him to a velveteed foyer. The piano trailed off. Ichabod wondered if he might be dreaming — but as Kat Van Tassel alighted from a salon, he knew this life, until now, had been sleep and only now did he wake.

**ICHABOD:** *(squeaking)* Ah.

*(sniffing)*

Ah. You must be the mystery — the mistress of the house — the younger — of the two.

**KAT:** I fit your description.

**ICHABOD:** Not the “mystery”; I said “mystery,” though it is a mistress before me, not a sphinx; you are not a riddle or puzzlement.

**KAT:** No, but I reserve the right to be.

**ICHABOD:** Of course. And I shall perverse — preserve — your reserving of it. Forgive me, my tongue is a terrible internuncio.

**KAT:** That bodes well for a teacher of music.

**ICHABOD:** *(laughs too much)* But truly I can instruct in psalmody. I was raised by nuns, you see. I spent my days tucked into the tenor section of a choir, and my nights tucked into bed with Cotton Mather.

**KAT:** Mather, eh? I'm wading into Wollstonecraft at the moment.

**ICHABOD:** *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman?* I've read it twice.

**KAT:** Do you agree with it?

**ICHABOD:** I think it's obvious that both men and women ought to be treated as rational beings. Aristotle was mistaken.

**KAT:** Yes he was.

**ICHABOD:** Ichabod Crane.

**KAT:** Kat Van Tassel.

**ICHABOD:** Kat?

**KAT:** Katrina, technically, but I despise it.

**ICHABOD:** Then I will ever call you Kat.

**MUSIC (VOCAL WARM-UPS)**

**THE CHRONICLER:** He led her in some warm-ups. She climbed from root to octave and Ichabod flew beside her. From the bench, he saw nothing but black and white keys and a lady's ankle. To be sure, he'd flown to Love's summit before, but never had the cause of his ascension been so fetchingly intelligent. Ichabod fancied them on a wagon, pots tinkling together in the sunset as they rode for Tennessee. He felt in so many glances that she felt a spark too. Before he might confirm with her, however...

**BROM:** *(off)* Where is my sparrow?!

**KAT:** Brom? Is that you?

**BROM:** *(off)* Well it better be.

*(in the room)*

If I see another suitor at your door, I'll drag him behind my horse.

**KAT:** Stop. You're awful.

**BROM:** Ho there, Crook Nose!

*(clap on the back)*

**ICHABOD:** Mr. Bones...

**BROM:** The mayor's got you teaching psalms, eh? One-on-one? *Tête-à-tête?*

**ICHABOD:** According to my contract, now and then.

**BROM:** *(to Kat)* Are you not going to kiss me?

*(tickles her)*

**KAT:** No! Not in front of the schoolmaster, Brom.

**BROM:** Oh come. He's seen worse behind the schoolhouse. Eh, Crane?

*(musses his hair)*

Eh?

**KAT:** Don't rumple him.

**BROM:** Eww, blast it, man. Your hair's greasier than a roasted duck. You should try hot water, Crane.

*(wipes his hand on Ichabod)*

**KAT:** Don't wipe yourself on him.

**ICHABOD:** It's alright.

**KAT:** Use a handkerchief, not his coat.

**ICHABOD:** Tomorrow's my laundry.

**BROM:** I should hope so, Crane. Now where's my smooch, you Dutch songbird?

**KAT:** Later.

**BROM:** Later because of him?

**KAT:** Later because I said so.

**BROM:** *(suggestively)* I'll give you "later."

*(grabs at her)*

**KAT:** Don't

**F/X:** *Horse cry (outside).*

**ICHABOD:** *(spooks)* What in tarnation was that sound?

**BROM:** Some stable boy poking at my horse, I bet.

**KAT:** Or someone made a simple mistake.

**BROM:** Back in a flash.

**KAT:** Brom, leave it. Brom.

*(sing-songy)*

Oh handsome man—!

**F/X:** *Door slams.*

**ICHABOD:** *(sniffing)* Well. I didn't know that you were affianced. *(French pronunciation)*

**KAT:** I'm not: he hasn't asked me yet.

**ICHABOD:** You seem familiar with each other.

**KAT:** Meaning?

**ICHABOD:** Oh, just that you, *seem*—

*(sniffing)*

**KAT:** Our families summer together. Shall we return to the lesson?

**ICHABOD:** Of course, we should, do that, so, let us return to Euterpe!

**KAT:** To whom?

**ICHABOD:** Euterpe: one of the muses presiding over music in the Greco-Roman religion.

**KAT:** I'm a Christian woman, Mr. Crane.

**ICHABOD:** I — didn't mean to imply otherwise. I merely thought you might like a classical allusion.

**KAT:** Just play, would you?

**ICHABOD:** Miss Van Tassel, if I have done you any injury—

**KAT:** I said play.

**ICHABOD:** *(throat clearing)* Of course. At your command, madam.

**MUSICAL STING**

**STATION BREAK**

**PART 2**

**MUSIC**

**F/X:** *Nostrils of a horse;*

*Chewing.*

*(ICHABOD startles awake)*

**THE CHRONICLER:** From a dream unrequited love, Ichabod bolted up.

**ICHABOD:** Ahh! Back, you beast, that's mine.

**THE CHRONICLER:** He'd fallen asleep with an apple in his pocket and somehow the plow horse had freed itself.

**ICHABOD:** You've eaten my Sunday pants, you brute.

*(tries to be scary)*

**HANS:** Control yourself, boy! You forgot to put him inside again.

**ICHABOD:** I did not, Mr. Van Ripper: I left him locked in his stall. Once again your horse has proven catastrophic.

**HANS:** Gunpowder ain't catastrophized anything.

**ICHABOD:** “Gunpowder” is liquidating my breakfast. My trousers have a gaping hole. I can see my thigh!

*(HANS cackles)*

**ICHABOD:** I shall sue for damages, sir.

**HANS:** You call that a thigh?!

**ICHABOD:** I know my anatomy.

**HANS:** Do you shave your legs?

**ICHABOD:** Do I what?

**HANS:** You're smooth as a Catholic statue down there.

**ICHABOD:** Be that as it may, I paid two dollars for these pants.

**HANS:** You overpaid.

**ICHABOD:** I think not: they're Amish wool.

**HANS:** They were Amish wool; now they're woeful.

**ICHABOD:** Thanks to you they are!

**HANS:** My wife'll give you needle and thread, tamp yourself down.

**ICHABOD:** Thread?! What of the fabric?! The mile of missing fabric!

*(HANS cackles)*

**## SCENE BREAK ##**

**F/X:** *Thunder;*

*Chalk squeaking.*

**THE CHRONICLER:** Later, the students of Sleepy Hollow stared at Ichabod with empty heads. Their vacancy reminded him of howling space itself.

**ICHABOD:** Can anyone define *this* figure of speech? Forget the others, please, and focus on these letters here. *Apodixis*. Anyone. What's it mean? Marjorie.

**MAGGIE:** It's Maggie.

**ICHABOD:** Answer, please.

**MAGGIE:** What's the question?

**ICHABOD:** *Apo-dixis*. What does it mean?

**MAGGIE:** I don't know, but it doesn't sound good.

**F/X:** *Tittering.*

**ICHABOD:** It's Greek, Maggie! — and I told you what it meant on Thursday.

*(claps hard)*

**BROM:** *(knocking)* Mr. Crane. How goes the lesson? Hello, children.

**F/X:** *Whispering.*

**ICHABOD:** Mr. Bones. I — I was not expecting a distinguished guest.

**BROM:** I saw the door ajar. I feared you may've been set upon by highwaymen.

**ICHABOD:** Ah, well, we have had no bandits, but thank you for your concern. What do you have there, in the bag?

**F/X:** *Door creaks.*

**BROM:** These hinges ought to be oiled.

**ICHABOD:** Yes, thank you, I shall dispatch one of my pupils to see to their maintenance. Marjorie.

*(snaps his fingers)*

**MAGGIE:** That's not my name.

**ICHABOD:** See to it.

**BROM:** No need: I found the oil rag. Your students can stay put; stay put, Maggie. I believe Mr. Crane was teaching you something. We sit for lessons. Sit — and hold this bag for me.

**MAGGIE:** Yes, Mr. Van Brunt.

**BROM:** Call me Bones.

**MAGGIE:** Yes...Mr. Bones.

**F/X:** *Oil rag;*

*Door creaking (back and forth).*

**ICHABOD:** You really don't have to bother with that.

**BROM:** Is the door in the habit of swinging open? Seems off-kilter.

**ICHABOD:** Yes, it does, the last man left the building in disrepair.

**BROM:** How's the latch?

**F/X:** *Latch (fidgeted with).*

**ICHABOD:** It doesn't work; I secure the building with...willow.

**BROM:** How's that?

**ICHABOD:** I employ several lengths of willow. I tie the latch to the nail on the wall with a butterfly bend.

*(MAGGIE tittering)*

**ICHABOD:** Hush.

**BROM:** If you tie the door from inside, Crane, how the Devil do you get out of here?

**ICHABOD:** I whiz out the window.

*(MAGGIE more tittering)*

**ICHABOD:** I asked for silence.

**MAGGIE:** I can't help it. I pictured you—

**F/X:** *Whip.*

*(ICHABOD spooks)*

**BROM:** He asked for silence, class.

**ICHABOD:** Mr. Bones, I thank you for your assistance in controlling them.

*(a "but")*

**BROM:** But of course. I am no expert, as you are, and I am surely too soft. I cracked my whip over your head, Maggie, to spare you the rod. I know your teacher has used it with repetition. He never swings without hitting I hear. Mr. Crane is not the sort of man to idly swing a rod. Are you, Crane?

**ICHABOD:** I should say not.

**BROM:** No.

*(claps)*



Listen to this man, children. You have a Socrates in your new schoolmaster. Men of his size bedeck the world but once a generation.

**ICHABOD:** Too generous, Mr. Bones.

**BROM:** Not at all. I speak right on. I always speak right on. Be sure to fix this door.

*(knocks on it)*

**ICHABOD:** It's a promise.

**BROM:** Also, hang a piece of iron over the threshold.

*(low)*

There's at least one witch in Sleepy Hollow, maybe two. Can you get ahold of some iron?

**ICHABOD:** *(low)* My host will have some. I can doubtless procure it from him. But who—?

**BROM:** *(loud again)* Oh Lord in Heaven, I forget myself! I had another reason for surprising you, Crane.

My Katrina sent me. She raved about her singing lesson with you. She wants to see you twice per week.

**ICHABOD:** Indeed? I thought the session had gone rather badly.

**BROM:** Apparently not. She wants to see you on Saturdays in addition. She's willing to pay. And she wants you to have this salted pork as an apology for “sniping” at you.

**ICHABOD:** *(the best gift he has ever received)* Salted pork?

**BROM:** Maggie. Pork. Now.

*(snaps his fingers; the bag)*

Can you do Saturdays?

**ICHABOD:** Certainly, yes, any time.

**BROM:** Very good. My Katrina has a bounty of talent in the recesses of her... person and I'm delighted that a teacher of your blamelessness and discretion will help her pluck it forth.

**ICHABOD:** I'm likewise delighted. Please extend my thanks for her support.

**BROM:** I will with haste.

**F/X:** *Thunder.*

## SCENE BREAK ##

**MUSIC (CLASSICAL PIANO)**

**F/X:** *Patter of rain.*

**THE CHRONICLER:** Come nightfall, Ichabod settled onto his straw with a wedge of salted pork. He

imagined he could hear the pianoforte of a Dutch princess. She played in minor key. He thought...

**ICHABOD:** Why is she asking me to her estate twice per week?

**THE CHRONICLER:** He thought...

**ICHABOD:** She did seem displeased with Brom yesterday. Perhaps she longs for wit over width...? Stop it, man.

**F/X:** *Pages.*

**THE CHRONICLER:** He found a page in the King James Bible.

**ICHABOD:** “Thy teeth are as a flock of sheep.” Oh my, the Songs of Solomon. Coincidence? No! Her teeth *are* like sheep — not a black one in the flock.

**THE CHRONICLER:** But how could *he* desire the perfection of *her*? Was the Devil in Sleepy Hollow, tempting him to the unattainable? No, he thought, if one considered...

**ICHABOD:** She is not married. Yet. She is not engaged. Officially. So if I approached h—

**F/X:** *Horse cry.*

*(ICHABOD spooks)*

**THE CHRONICLER:** From the road came a high spiteful whinny. Or had it come from the Van Ripper's fields? He could not say. The piano song frayed in his mind and became the ‘bok’ of chickens.

**F/X:** *Hens.*

Was it the Headless Horseman he'd been hearing on the road? Was a witch at work here? Had Ichabod come to a place infected by Hell?

**ICHABOD:** *In nomine Patris, et Filii, et Spiritus Sancti. Amen.*

*(steadies his breathing)*

**THE CHRONICLER:** He sat in the gaslight till drowsiness cantered on his temples. His memory swayed into Might-Have-Beens and Might-Bes and soon he rode an invisible donkey to Saint Peter's gate. He asked Peter whether God had shown mercy on his mad, mad mother.

**## SCENE BREAK ##**

**MUSIC (KAT ON PIANO)**

**KAT:** *(singing)* WITH FORBIDDEN PLEASURES

SHOULD THIS VAIN WORLD CHARM

**ICHABOD & KAT:** OR ITS SORDID TREASURES

**ICHABOD & KAT:** SEEK TO WORK ME HARM

**KAT:** BRING TO MY REMEMBRANCE

SAD GETHESAMNE

**ICHABOD:** OR IN DARKER SEMBLANCE

**KAT & ICHABOD:** CROSS-CROWNED CALVARY.

**KAT:** (*bigger*) WHEN MY LIFE IS ENDING

THOUGH IN GRIEF OR PAIN

**ICHABOD & KAT:** WHEN MY BODY CHANGES

BACK TO DUST AGAIN

**KAT:** ON YOUR TRUTH RELYING

THROUGH THAT MORAL STRIFE

**ICHABOD:** JESUS, TAKE ME DYING

**KAT & ICHABOD:** TO ETERNAL LIFE/WIFE!

(*KAT laughs without restraint*)

**ICHABOD:** ... Are you quite alright?

**KAT:** You said “wife.”

**ICHABOD:** I said what?

**KAT:** You said “wife” not “life.”

**ICHABOD:** I don't think so.

**KAT:** I sang “eternal life,” you sang “eternal wife” — as in, “Jesus, take me as your eternal wife.” I can see you with a bouquet next to Jesus.

(*laughs again*)

**ICHABOD:** (*lying*) Ah well, I have seen the psalm in print with the word “wife.”

(*sniffling*)

**KAT:** You have?

**ICHABOD:** In some editions.

**KAT:** I've never seen it.

**ICHABOD:** I think it's becoming more popular in places. Some people sing “wife” to signify one's marriage to the Church.

**KAT:** “Jesus, take me dying to the altar”?

**ICHABOD:** Not a literal altar.

**KAT:** I understand, but what does it mean for Jesus to take you into the Church? A believer has entered the Church by taking Jesus into one's heart.

**ICHABOD:** Yes, it's a paradox. Which came first? Jesus or the Church?

**KAT:** Jesus. I think you have wives on the mind, Ichabod. You call on more ladies in Sleepy Hollow than the moon.

**ICHABOD:** (*splutters*) I — That — Yes — but platonically, strictly in my capacity—

**KAT:** Oh me oh my! There *is* someone.

**ICHABOD:** Miss Van Tassel, we should resume.

(*sniffing*)

**KAT:** Don't call me Miss with your cheeks blushing. We're the same age, almost. Is it Agatha Comyings? Your someone?

**ICHABOD:** There is no someone. Shall we resume?

**KAT:** Hosea Comyings?

**ICHABOD:** Assuredly I am not enamored of Hosea.

**KAT:** I can see you with one of them — a step down for you, a step up for them.

**ICHABOD:** I will not step up or down with a Comyngses.

**KAT:** Why do you say that, because of their odor?

**ICHABOD:** (*low*) Do they have an odor?

**KAT:** Oh. No. Sorry. How boorish of me.

**ICHABOD:** It's not boorish if they do.

**KAT:** They do: there's a *musk*. From the animals they trap.

**ICHABOD:** I have seen an array of dried pelts on their property.

**KAT:** It looks like the Middle Ages. Though one can live well on beavers, I hear.

**ICHABOD:** I suppose.

**KAT:** And they are brainy, aren't they?

**ICHABOD:** Beavers?

**KAT:** The Sisters Comyngs. Wouldn't you say they're clever?

**ICHABOD:** They can sound out some Milton. They're nothing like you.

**KAT:** You think I'm a bright person?

**ICHABOD:** Of course I do. You're obviously brilliant.

**KAT:** Am I?

**ICHABOD:** Kat, in these past five weeks — between the psalms you can already sing without my coaching — you have recited the poems of Phillis Wheatley from memory, performed whole speeches from *As You Like It*, and have asked my opinion of Jean-Jacques Rousseau's theory of human nature.

**KAT:** Which you haven't answered me about.

**ICHABOD:** I'm still digesting his thesis!

**KAT:** Hurry up.

**ICHABOD:** I will — if you admit you know that you're the smartest woman in leagues.

**KAT:** Why do you say the smartest “woman”?

**ICHABOD:** The smartest bipedal entity — besides the most interesting, objectively speaking.

**KAT:** My father doesn't find me very interesting. Or smart.

**ICHABOD:** Horsefeathers.

**KAT:** He doesn't.

*(low)*

He grabbed me by the arm last night and said if I were “really smart” I'd have my own estate by now.

**ICHABOD:** You're nineteen, with not a materialist bone in your body.

**KAT:** I'm an old maid — and bound to Mammon as much as God.

**ICHABOD:** Piffle. You're a New Woman, in the mold of your Mary Wollstonecraft, and I am certain Mr. Bones — Mr. Van Brunt — will propose. How could a stud such as him not find you fit?

**KAT:** *(sighs)* You're sweet to me. But I fear my old father is right: I'm as ripe of one his peaches in the orchard out there — rosy-cheeked but soon for the heap.

**ICHABOD:** You're not a peach at all. Never compare yourself to pitted fruit in my company.

**KAT:** To what should I compare myself, Ichabod Crane?

**ICHABOD:** I think...you ought not compare yourself. “We are singular beings,” my mother says, in her better moments. She insists we are, each of us, breath whirling out of the Great Unmanifest. The heat of our minds, the tides in our blood, the crystals that chime in our bones: it's all unreproducible in its glory.

**KAT:** *(means it)* That's comforting.

**ICHABOD:** She also says the mole on my forehead reminds her of cow pies and is a sign of bad fortune.

**KAT:** *(banter)* I thought moles brought you riches in old age.

**ICHABOD:** *(serious)* That's if they're spread out, over the body. A mole at your hairline is death. According to Mother.

**KAT:** *(laughs)* I want to meet her. What did you mean “in her better moments”?

**ICHABOD:** Ah. That. Well...

**F/X:** *A hunting horn blares.*

*(ICHABOD & KAT spooked)*

**BROM:** *(laughs)* Hello, choristers! How do you like my new hunting horn?

**KAT:** Not at all! You scared the water out of me! Have you been eavesdropping?

**BROM:** Only since the “heat of our minds” part. Your mother sounds like a Quaker.

**ICHABOD:** She was Lutheran to the end.

**BROM:** “End”? Did something happen? What polished her off?

**KAT:** What a frightful question. Have you no recollection of manners, Brom?

**BROM:** Psh. As I recollect, you were supposed to meet my mother for tea forty-three minutes ago.

**ICHABOD:** Oh drat.

**KAT:** Your mother's never on time, why should I be?

**BROM:** “Manners”? Could “manners” be the answer?

*(KAT sucks in through her teeth)*

**ICHABOD:** I am *so* sorry for neglecting the time, Mr. Bones.

**KAT:** Do not tender *him* an apology.

**ICHABOD:** My pocket watch quit working some weeks ago and I—

**KAT:** I bear the responsibility.

**BROM:** Yes, you do — but if your watch quit working, Crane, why do you wear it? *(pokes him)*

**ICHABOD:** Well, I—

**BROM:** It's not hard to have a watch repaired.

*(poking)*

**ICHABOD:** No, but—

**KAT:** Stop poking him.

**BROM:** He's wearing a dead watch!

**KAT:** I don't care what he's wearing!

**BROM:** It's funny.

**ICHABOD:** Yes, it is.

**KAT:** No, it's not.

**BROM:** So you're the judge of everything, eh? The judge manners, the judge of humor, the judge of propriety.

**KAT:** Oh, is there some behavior of mine you find improper, my love? Name it.

**BROM:** Do you want a Latin classification or shall I use the *common* name?

**KAT:** If you're going to accuse me of something wicked, then do it.

**ICHABOD:** Mr. Bones, I can vouch for the continued honor of your—

**KAT:** (*chuffs*) I beg your pardon, gentlemen, I feel a sudden fever.

(*storms off*)

**MUSICAL STING**

## SCENE BREAK ##

**F/X:** *Brook.*

(*ICHABOD slurps twice*)

**BROM:** (*off*) Crane?

**ICHABOD:** (*inhales water/coughs*) Mr. Bones...you surprised me. I was just...

**BROM:** (*close*) Mr. Van Tassel has a well by the barn, man: you needn't hunker like a moose calf over the brook.

**ICHABOD:** I dropped the bucket into the well — along with my canteen.

**BROM:** Ah, pity. I wanted to explain what you witnessed back there.

**ICHABOD:** I need no exposition. I know the mutability of young love.

**BROM:** She isn't always uppity.

**ICHABOD:** I did not take her to be.

**BROM:** The problem is familial.

**ICHABOD:** Thus none of my affair.

**BROM:** No — but you do call on folks and naturally they ask for tidbits from high society.

**ICHABOD:** I am no prattler, Mr. Bones.

**BROM:** I trust you are not. But one word can ride faster than two horses.

**ICHABOD:** True; however, what my one word might be is far from obvious. So.

**BROM:** I know your mother died of lunacy.

**ICHABOD:** Died? She has consumption, but—

**BROM:** She was a loony and a murderess.

(*over Ichabod's stammering*)

I said that I would look your family up, Mr. Crane. You implied to me and Katrina that she was still

living, but she is seven months cold. I have not shared particulars with anyone, but someone's barn could burn to the ground if people learnt that their schoolmaster's mother had been a raving butcher of husbands and he declined to mention as much during his interview with the town fathers.

**ICHABOD:** Who told you?

**BROM:** No matter. I only bring it up to illustrate the danger of gossip, and to point you toward a feeling of community.

**ICHABOD:** I am the finest schoolmaster this backwater has ever had. You can tell that to “the town fathers.” I am well qualified.

**BROM:** I agree, and personally I am not deterred by reports of your mother, or even your lies. It's understandable. And though these hoi polloi problems tend to pass down in the blood, you're nothing but odd, so far. If this brain wastage troubles you too, its manifestation is currently weak. The symptoms appear about your age so I would say you've already cleared the hedge.

**F/X:** *Uncorking.*

Whiskey? Single malt.

**ICHABOD:** No thank you.

**BROM:** Cheers anyway.

*(drinks)*

As I was saying: Katrina's problem is familial. Old Man Baltus made bad choices and now his children are nervous to the point of anarchy. So you see the true, foul fount of Katrina's tantrum today?

**ICHABOD:** I suppose I do, yes. Good day, Mr. Bones.

**BROM:** Would you like to borrow my horse?

**ICHABOD:** My legs will serve.

**BROM:** Godspeed then. If you run, you might beat the forces of night.

**MUSICAL STING**

**## SCENE BREAK ##**

**F/X:** *Frogs.*

*Quill;*

**THE CHRONICLER:** Ichabod could not go back to the Van Ripper's barn that night. His mind refused to calm, and so he propped open the windows of the schoolhouse and reckoned with the dark electric air. The desks were lined up like bodies without heads, driving him to poetry.

**ICHABOD:** *(reading)* “If he offends in penning this fancy,



you must forgive his pale and doltish heart—  
on which your face performs necromancy  
and quite un-bricks his cold reason's rampart.” Ehh, no.

**F/X:** *He scribbles out a word;*

*Quill.*

“...and quite un-pricks his cold reason's rampart”!

**F/X:** *A window slams shut.*

**ICHABOD:** (*spooks*) Who's there?

**THE CHRONICLER:** The schoolmaster looked about the room. The windows were open, every one wafting the chill of October. A perfume of cut hay hung in the night. Was it not a window shutting he heard?

**F/X:** *Latch.*

Ichabod went to the door of the schoolhouse and screwed his eyes on the muddy lane beside the building. This late on a Saturday no one would be on the roads. And no one he saw in the vast rotting shadows.

**VOICE IN THE NIGHT:** *Ich-a-bod.*

*(ICHABOD breath catching)*

**F/X:** *Door shutting.*

### **MUSIC**

**THE CHRONICLER:** He shut out the night; fumbled with a switch of willow; tied the door.

**VOICE IN THE NIGHT:** *Ich-a-bod.*

**THE CHRONICLER:** The candle guttered. He felt for the piece of iron he'd taken from the Van Ripper's farm. Yes, the iron was there, nailed tight over the threshold. A witch could not enter.

**ICHABOD:** “Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil.”

**VOICE IN THE NIGHT:** *My son. My son.*

**THE CHRONICLER:** The rasping in the night could have been man or woman. Yet Ichabod paid attention with both his outer senses and his inner—

**VOICE IN THE NIGHT:** *Hark me my son.*

**THE CHRONICLER:** So what he heard in the wee hours of the world was beyond the world.

**VOICE IN THE NIGHT:** *My little Ichabod.*

*(ICHABOD starts to sob)*

**VOICE IN THE NIGHT:** *Yes, yes, you know me.*

**ICHABOD:** I fear that I do.

**VOICE IN THE NIGHT:** *Do not fear. Just say my name.*

**ICHABOD:** I cannot. You need to... You need to move on.

**VOICE IN THE NIGHT:** *Will you say my name?*

**ICHABOD:** Make your peace. Please.

**VOICE IN THE NIGHT:** *Say my name, sweetling.*

**ICHABOD:** *(sobs)* Mary?

*(sniffing)*

Mary Gibson Crane?

*(nothing but night)*

Mother?

**F/X:** *Door bursts open;*

*Thud on the floor.*

*(ICHABOD screams)*

**THE CHRONICLER:** A black mass crashed in the door, slid on the hardwood, and stopped near the desk. The candle choked itself out and Ichabod fixed upon the creature in a beam of moonlight.

**F/X:** *Dog whining.*

**ICHABOD:** Oh no no no.

**THE CHRONICLER:** He rushed to it. The dog had been slashed a dozen times at least. Long black fur was shorn away. A symbol had been carved into the poor boy's flank.

**ICHABOD:** *(to the dog)* Shh. It's alright. It's alright.

**THE CHRONICLER:** Ichabod peered into the dark of the schoolhouse door. He felt sure the Devil had come to Sleepy Hollow.

**MUSICAL STING**

**STATION BREAK**

**PART 3**

**CONTAINS 10 MORE PAGES**